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THE MONKEYS IN RED CAPS,

AN OLD STORY;

NEWLY INSCRIBED TO THE

CLUB OF JACOBINS.

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AN OLD STORY;

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CLUB OF JACOBINS:

By TIMOTHY THRUM, Esq. K

VERSE-CAPPER TO THE AFFILIATED SOCIETY AT MOTHER RED-CAP'S:

This was not thought on then,
When this old Cap was new.
OLD SONG.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

M,DCC,XCII.

THE MONKEYS IN RED CAPS

AN OLD STORY

PRESENTED TO THE

CLUB OF JACOBINS

BY THE



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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT has been long familiar to all Readers of the Ancient Classics and Modern Newspapers, that, among the Romans, a Cap was the emblem of liberty ; but what sort of Cap it was, has been a question of considerable difficulty. Several of the most distinguished friends to the present Constitution of France, not above three or fours years since, strenuously maintained that it ought to be made with Ears and Bells, like what we call a Fool's-cap ; and, within a year, the same persons were of opinion that it should be more like the Caps of the black Hussars, who gave no quarter, with a death's head and cross bones in the front, to strike terror into all Aristocrats.

In our own Country great ferments have at times taken place upon this subject. There is a tradition, not very remote, in

one of our Universities, that a serious rebellion once broke out there, occasioned by two factions of Caps among the Students. One of these factions, who wore plain square Caps, insisted that a black silk tassel was essential to the Cap of Liberty; while the other, who wore plain round Caps, considered the tassel as a mere accident, but contended that form was of the very essence of things, and that the Cap of Liberty was not a round, but a square Cap. At length, to restore peace, that learned body prudently determined that each Party should be left in quiet possession of their own opinions, and wear their Caps accordingly. Things were not indeed pushed to this extremity in our venerable Society of Antiquaries; but they had many warm disputes about this same Cap of Liberty, until one evening, after a very long and perplexing debate, they at last agreed, that it certainly must have been a nightcap; and since the Cap fitted them, they would wear it. But another sort of doubt being started, as to the materials, colour, and make of the Cap, they resolved to consult their pillows upon it. Many a night did these knotty points, with all their incidents and circumstances, make their nightcaps fit like blister-plasters on their heads; but as I have never heard the result, I presume they were not able to determine it. The Society, however, to which I have the honour of belonging, claims the merit of having early made the discovery, which their
own

own humility would not let them obtrude on the world, but which has been lately sanctioned beyond the power of scepticism to doubt, or of time to obliterate, by the decisive decree of the Jacobins at Paris. Those Oracles of the Rights of Man, it is well known, have pronounced the true Cap of Liberty to be a *red thrum Cap—without Ears or Bells*.

As soon as their Resolution was made public, all the heads in Paris were in a flame with red thrum Caps. This topical scarlet-fever became in a moment epidemical. There was not an old Courtier, now become a red-hot Patriot, but sold his Aristocratical hat and red feather, to provide himself with the red Cap of Liberty; and the poor Mechanics, who could not afford the genuine thrum Caps, got themselves substitutes from the old red Petticoats of their wives and daughters. The streets of Paris, at a distance, appeared like the streets of London after a high wind, all bestrewn with pieces of red tiles, bricks, and pots from chimnies. Every man in the gardens of the Thuilleries reminded you of the old God of Gardens; and the Loungers in the Champs Elisees gave you the image of a troop of miserable Ghosts, dispatched fresh to the other Elysian-fields from the hands of an Indian scalping-party. The Jacobins looked like so many raw heads and bloody bones. The parterre of the Opera-house resembled a parterre

of red garden poppies : and the crop of the National Assembly presented to the eye nothing but chaff and red weed.

Nor were living heads only new *tiled* in this taste. The statues of their favourite poets were crowned with a red Cap instead of a laurel wreath ; and they could not murder an Emperor in jest upon the stage, but the people instantly demanded that the Assassins of a Cæsar should be honoured in the persons of their dramatic representatives with the new civic Crown.

The contagion, however, was similar to the late plague in Egypt, which, as the Newspapers inform us, though it seized half a million of men, did not last above three days. *The worthy Petion* (as Lord Stanhope so excellently characterizes him), sent a message to the Jacobins ; and though the National Assembly had patriotically refused to be uncovered in the presence of the King, the Club immediately uncovered to the message of the Mayor.

His motives for this interference have been variously represented. Some say that he was induced to it by a remonstrance from the virtuous ladies who lately desired to be armed and officered, but whose modesty was shocked at the indecent appearance of the men in these new Skull Caps, looking all like—I don't know what. Other accounts are, that he was really alarmed lest they might crack each other's crowns, just to dye their

their Caps of a purer red. Perhaps he was afraid the Club might be mistaken by strangers for an Hospital of scald heads : or, as he is a great Patriot, and a man of refined sagacity, he may not unreasonably have trembled for the liberties of France, if, when Mr. Brissot was going to thunder from the Tribune against the Despots of the Earth, any malignant and abandoned Aristocrat in the Gallery had slipped a stout Norfolk Turkey Cock at the head of the Orator.

The two morning papers which we take in at our Society, are the *TIMES* and the *MORNING CHRONICLE*. When the French intelligence was read to us from those papers, on Monday, the 26th of March, the following story was told us by one of our Members, whom, by the way, I rather suspect to be a sly Aristocrat. But however that may be, his story, though he was a little trimmed for borrowing from the book, entertained us all ; and I was ordered officially to put it into verse. I obeyed ; and now print my production at the request of the Society.

It may be proper here to observe, that, in order to shew my sincere and unfeigned attachment to the French people, I have conformed to the only law of their old code which they have not abrogated ;—I mean the law of their versification, requiring an equal mixture of single and double, or, as they call them,

them, masculine and feminine rhymes. This little complaisant attention to their taste will, I trust, be taken in good part by them, and may, perhaps, be as effectual as eating and drinking here without sending them a scrap, in sweetening and conciliating their minds to the Commercial Treaty; which Dr. Priestley, in the 25th page of his late Appeal to the Publick, has declared to have been the *only political purpose of commemorating the 14th of July*, by Revolution dinners at Birmingham, and other different parts of the kingdom. At the same time I must whisper in confidence to my countrymen, dealers in metre, that having made the experiment, I advise them to defend their old English Liberty; and truly hope the Jacobins will soon complete the emancipation of their Fellow Citizens in this, as in every other instance; that having helped them to get their own feet out of their wooden shoes, and many of them indeed out of all shoes, those enlighteners of the public mind may no longer suffer the feet of their verses to be crippled by prejudice in these stocks of critical shoe-makers.

I have only to add such extracts from our papers as gave occasion to the story, and to beg the Reader's attention more especially to the noble constitutional harangue of Mr. Dumourier, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the Club of the Jacobins; which, however, for the honour of my country,

I trust

I trust yet to hear excelled whenever his Majesty will be graciously pleased to take a new Secretary of State for the Foreign Department from Coachmaker's Hall.

The TIMES, Monday, March 26, 1792.

" Paris, March 21.

" The red thrum Caps are already proscribed; it is
" said that they were invented by an ingenious tradesman, a
" friend of the Jacobins, who has cleared by the sale of them
" 100,000 ecus."

" The new Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the first visit
" which he made to his friends, the Jacobins, pulled his
" Cap out of his pocket, and placing it on his head, delivered his patriotic harangue. Immediately after, a messenger was received from Mr. Petion, the worthy Mayor of
" Paris, requesting that the red Caps might disappear, as he
" was apprehensive that the Aristocrats might adopt them,
" and thus create confusion among the Patriots. Instantly
" all the Caps disappeared. From their first appearance,
" they had risen in value from 30 sous to six and seven livres
" a piece. After Mr. Petion's message, they might be
" bought for a sous."

" At the *Theatre François*, after the death of *Cæsar*, the
" statue of Voltaire was brought on the stage, and decorated
with

“ with a red Cap. Some of the Patriots insisted that Cæsar’s
“ assassins should also receive similar honours; but they were
“ disappointed.”

“ A sarcastic address to Mr. Petion, in the name of the
“ Nymphs of the *Palais Royal*, &c. was the true cause of
“ his requesting the Jacobins to pocket their red thrum
“ Caps.”

MORNING CHRONICLE, Monday, March 26, 1792.

“ *Paris, Wednesday, March 21st.*

“ On Monday the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr.
“ Dumourier, appeared in the bosom of the Jacobin Club.
“ All the Members of the Club were covered with the red
“ bonnet of liberty. The new Minister drew his from his
“ pocket, put it on, and delivered the following short address
“ amidst the fraternal exclamations of the Society.”

“ Brothers and Friends,

“ All the moments of my life shall be consecrated to fulfil
“ the confidence of the Nation, and the choice of the Con-
“ stitution and King. I shall carry into the Negotiations
“ with which I am charged all the energy of a free People,
“ and all the truth of a constitutional Minister. These
“ Nego-

“ Negotiations shall speedily produce either a solid peace or a
“ decisive war. In the latter case I shall break my political
“ pen, and resume my rank in the army; to live triumphant,
“ or to die free with my brothers.

“ I undertake a difficult task; I entreat you to aid me with
“ your counsels, by means of correspondence. Tell me,
“ tell me all the truth—the severest truths—but support me
“ and save me from calumny—It is that which I demand from
“ my brothers.”

“ The President answered him by an eulogium on his vigour
“ and integrity. A letter was then received from M. Petion,
“ with a strong admonition to the Club, to abstain from
“ wearing the *red Bonnet*; as these marked distinctions were
“ calculated to disturb the public peace, and in all the
“ Theatres and other places of general resort, to excite tumult
“ and disorder. This recommendation was seconded by
“ M. Robespierre. A motion was made, that the Members
“ of the Society should not wear the red Bonnet—It was car-
“ ried—and in one moment all the Bonnets were pulled off,
“ and pocketed.

“ The same evening, and while this was transacting at the
“ Jacobins, at the Theatre de la Nation the tragedy of
“ *Cæsar* was performed to a house crowded with red Bonnets;

(x)

" and the enthusiasm produced by the Poet, in the warm expressions of Brutus and Cassius against the Tyrant, were such, that at the end of the play they ordered the bust of Voltaire to be brought on the stage, when it was, with great ceremony, *crowned* with the red Bonnet of Liberty. It is, they exclaimed, Sans doute la plus glorieuse de ses Couronnes."

* * * * *

" The forty soldiers of Chateaufieux, released from the galleys by a decree, are on their way here from Brest. The friends of the Constitution had resolved, that their chains should be hung up as trophies in the hall of the Society, and communicated their resolution to the Society of the same name at Brest. The latter had previously resolved, that the chains should be made into bayonets and pikes, and promised to send half of these arms to the Society in Paris."

THE

THE MONKEYS IN RED CAPS.

THAT Men are Monkeys some aver;
Rouffeau, 'tis clear, held that opinion.

Not so the fair Philosopher,
Who takes a Monkey for her Minion;
She holds upon a different plan,
That every Monkey is a Man.
And it might pose you to discover,
In what Pug differs from her Lover;
Only, that sometimes in my mind,
When I have heard the rivals chatter,
Pug seem'd a clearer way to find,
To make you comprehend the matter.

I know not to which fide inclines
Your Creed, enlighten'd Jacobines!
Nor think it, much as I admire ye,
Worth any trouble of enquiry.

For all true Sages of your breed,
 Unclogg'd by souls, must square their Creed
 By one alternative or t'other;
 And which is which, can raise no mighty pother:
 'Tis an unnatural dispute*,
 Against the Rights of Man and Brute,
 A claim of preference, as *elder Brother*.
 Take either side, 'tis much the same;
 The same their kindred to a tittle:
 You cannot think it sin or shame
 Of your own kin to learn a little.
 Then hear me an old story tell,
 How once red Caps were worn by Monkeys;
 Caps that would fit you very well,
 Like your own Caps, my dear Quidnuncis†!

From them perhaps you took the thought;
 'Twas a judicious imitation:
 Only it rais'd my admiration,
 How Caps by all your Club were bought.

* I cannot help taking this opportunity of declaring my perfect conviction in the clear, calm, rational, philosophical, legal, and political arguments of Mr. Thomas Paine against primogeniture~~ship~~, as he elegantly calls it. But some heads are strangely formed to resist the clearest truths. I never could satisfy my elder brother or my attorney on this subject.

† ——— The Nation of Quidnuncis;
 So Monomotapa calls Monkeys.

SWIFT.

Why

Why some of them to pay fix livres,
And some to pay but thirty fous,
As Frenchmen all are good contrivers,
To purchase Caps must sell their shoes!
But this explains how they came by 'em;
My story taught you to supply 'em.
Though after all, indeed I fear
Wherever hear'd, you chanc'd to hear
A bad edition of the story.
There is a sequel in the best,
I fairly think worth all the rest;
So I shall lay the whole before ye.
Nor scorn a story from a book :—
“ God give you grace therein to look !”

IN Africa one broiling summer,
Beneath the sun's meridian ray,
An English trader, a new comer,
Faint and fatigued pursued his way.
At length it was his luck to enter
An ancient forest's cooling shade,
Where piercing to the secret center,
Upon the ground his limbs he laid.

It was a wood, by Monkeys haunted;
A race, by Man and Beast undaunted;

No

No poor Baboons and vulgar Apes,
 But Monkeys of superior order,
 Whom in their actions as their shapes,
 Ev'n Bigots* own on Men to border :
 Monkeys, who, were they so inclin'd
 (Their countrymen, the Negroes, tell us)
 Could plainly, as their human fellows
 At Paris, jabber out their mind ;
 But they keep silence from mere knavery,
 For fear of being sent to slavery ;
 And rather than just cross the seas
 For a Domingo education,
 There live content with savage ease,
 Owning no Sovereign but the Nation.

Our Pedlar thought he now might steal
 A little respite from his labours,
 Nor any terror did he feel
 (He was a stranger) from his neighbours ;

* The word *Bigot*, I must confess, is a very favourite word with me. I learned it from Dr. Priestley. It means any person who is so perversely unreasonable and unphilosophical as not instantly to believe all mankind knaves, fools, and blockheads, for three thousand years past, merely because you tell him so. The word prejudice was a good word too, before a late panegyric was made upon it ; and now it is good for very little. Indeed it never was so emphatic as Bigotry ; but may even now serve for a change. To give these terms their proper force, you must always call whatever you choose to say yourself—Truth, Reason, Philosophy, and Light.

So from among his wares he drew
A packet of red Caps, and tried 'em,
Selected one that seem'd to do,
And left the rest, where he untied 'em :
Then for a pillow plac'd his pack,
And snor'd securely on his back :
One moment ; and no Church was faster ;
Which was the cause of his disaster.

The Monkeys had observ'd the Man :
At once Chimpanzees, Jockos, Baris,
From every corner, every clan
Around the spot tumultuous ran,
Like philosophic mobs at Paris
Bent to demolish without stop
A palace, or a baker's shop.
Our wild Philosophers, by acclamation,
Like them, soon voted crimes against the Nation ;
Nor waiting trial, and all that,
Just cried " Halloo, Aristocrat !"
And of his Caps made instant confiscation.
—But he slept sweetly all the while,
Nor dreamt of Man's or Monkey's guile.

These Confiscators were a party,
Whose faction rul'd the Monkey state ;
All to the Nation staunch and hearty ;
All to their King professing hate :

At

At whose resolves, in Club assembled,
 The Monarch in his prison trembled :
 —For these same Monkeys had a King*,
 Kept like a Monster in a string.
 And now above, among the branches,
 The Club were squatting on their haunches;
 Each with his Cap upon his head,
 Puffing his cheeks to look the bigger,
 Proud of his little rag of red ;—
 They made a most tremendous figure.

'Twas ludicrous to see the rout
 They kept about these Caps of Freedom ;
 —For that's the name which they decreed 'em—
 One Monkey only was without.
 He rose and bow'd to his superiors ;
 But, ere he hazarded his case,
 Pull'd, with all gravity of face,
 A Cap from under his posteriors.
 Thus dress'd, he ventur'd to begin ;
 " Brothers and friends !" he faintly stammer'd ;
 Then gave a shrug, and then a grin,
 Began again, and hack'd, and hammer'd.

" The King (he said) had been so good
 " To make him Minister beyond the Wood ;

* This I understand, is confirm'd by Lord Monboddo, in his origin of languages.
 The Chimpanzees (he says) have a King, who does no work.

And

“ And, in return, his resolution
“ Was fix’d to be a faithful Scrub,
“ Not to the King, but Constitution ;”
(—That is, in Monkey-speech, the Club.)
“ Should he display true Monkey spirit,
“ The Club, the Club, had all the merit.
“ Some Lions had been heard to growl,
“ And there were Monkeys too who fear’d ’em ;
“ But he would make the Lions howl,
“ For he was stout enough to beard ’em ;
“ Or if his prowess met a rub,
“ Would come and die among the Club.
“ One boon (he cried) I must solicit ;
“ If Monkeys (as may come to pass)
“ Shall call me Scoundrel, Rogue, or Afs,
“ O ! let my Brothers be explicit !
“ All, all the truth to me convey ;
“ No truths severe I wish to smother :
“ But make them prove me, what they say.
“ I claim this justice to a Brother.”

The speech was follow’d by applause ;
All chatter’d, grinn’d, and clapp’d their paws :
In short, they made so wild a racket,
The Man was waken’d in a fright,
And staring with half-open fight
Perceiv’d the pillage of his packet.

D

What

What could he do? By throwing stones
 He thought to get his goods and chattels.
 A show'r of sticks in answer rattles :
 And soon he learn'd, that broken bones
 Were all he must expect from battles.

But art has many a time prevail'd
 Where violence before had fail'd.
 He was a young Peripatetic,
 Nor knew what Aristotle* says of Man;
 But this he knew, the Monkey Clan
 Are in their natures all mimetic.
 So, for the gentle air of love
 He chang'd his gestures of defiance;
 With arms outspread he look'd above,
 As offering friendship and alliance;
 And his conditions to propound,
 Advancing, cast his Cap upon the ground.
 Peace in a moment reign'd, where all was riot:
 The Monkeys caught by his device,
 Their Caps discarded in a trice,
 And let him pick and pack them up in quiet.

Thought he, " if I have any brains,
 " My honest friends, you yet may pay for plunder.

* Mr. Twining had not then translated the Poetics of Aristotle, where, in the fourth chapter, I read the passage calling Man the most mimetic of Animals.

" When

“ When all is over, count your gains :
“ Only beware next time you make no blunder.”

Another packet from his wares
He drew, and open'd knives and razors ; —
Thence with due flourishes and airs,
Surrounded by ten thousand gazers,
A razor in his hand he took,
And tho' he never por'd on Plato*,
At the drawn weapon smil'd, like Cato
Puzzled between his sword and book.
And now, as jugglers at beginning
Show every clown each cup and ball,
While round the savages stood grinning,
He shew'd the razor's edge to all ;
Now seem'd across his throat to draw it :
The Monkeys would have sworn they saw it.
But Monkeys now and then are wrong,
When positive in their own notion :
For shifting with a dext'rous motion
His hand, he pass'd the back along.

* It must be so, Plato thou reasonest well,
* * * * *
My bane and antidote are both before me.
* * * * *
The Soul secur'd in her existence smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.

CATO'S SOLILOQUY.

Then roll'd his eyes, like one delighted,
 With various anticks, on pretence,
 As if some strangely-pleasing sense
 The razor's tickling touch excited.
 At last he sunk upon his side
 As to repose, well satisfied.

The razors left at their discretion,
 The Master, as they thought, asleep;
 The Monkeys their old morals keep,
 And hurry round to take possession.
 Each seiz'd a razor; to his throat
 Each, like the Man, his razor lifted,
 Only they just forgot to note
 How he his hand and razor shifted;
 Each grinn'd and gash'd the razor in,
 Which caus'd another sort of grin:
 They fell; and as the blood was trickling,
 Perceiv'd themselves both knaves and fools,
 Who playing with ill-gotten tools,
 Cut their own throats by way of tickling.

What they had done our Hero 'spied,
 And up he started. " By your favours,
 " I thought you, Sirs, more cunning shavers:"
 As he reclaim'd his goods, he cried.
 " But come, make honest restitution:
 " My razors by design I left,

" That

" That crimes might meet just retribution,
 " And thieves be punish'd by their theft."

Now for a word of application
 Why I address this Tale to you.
 The forty men of Chateaufieux *
 Have put me in a trepidation.
 For when these galley-birds undrest,
 Your own Quidnuncki friends at Brest,
 Cajol'd the men, and stole the fetters,
 The goods and chattels of their betters;
 Though had they hinted such a thing,
 As wishing them for their own wearing,
 I doubt not, the good-natur'd King
 Would have bestow'd them for a fairing.
 But no! the pleasure which we steal,
 Is sweet beyond the common measure:
 And thence all true Quidnunckis feel,
 In stealing an uncommon pleasure.
 The fetters, as I said, they stole:
 Then to the forge dispatch'd the whole,
 To take the shape of swords and lances;
 As plate is sent by vulgar thieves
 To the refiner, who receives,
 To make it sure against all chances:

* See the concluding paragraph of the Extract from the Morning Chronicle.

And

† And now they promise you to send,
 (Conceiving it their bounden duty,)
 A fair and equal dividend
 Of swords and lances from the booty.

Your imitation of the Caps
 If I admir'd—and I have said it;—
 In throwing them away, perhaps
 You copied with increase of credit.
 All this without a broken head,
 Or none to mention, 'twas most happy!
 But these blood-thirsty arms I dread:
 Beware lest justice now entrap ye.
 She sometimes, in the Pedlar's style,
 Tempts to destroy. Then be suspicious:
 For when she seems to sleep awhile,
 'Tis a dog's sleep to catch the vicious.
 At Heav'n, like valiant men*, you laugh;
 Let not Heav'n triumph, I implore ye;
 And, what you more regard by half,
 Think how your mortal foes will glory,
 If with these very plunder'd tools,
 While you at foldiering are playing,
 You, like my Monkeys, are such fools,
 If not yourselves, each other to be slaying:

* I have always greatly admired the spirit of a passage in Mr. Vaillant's Account of the Hottentots, where he rejects it as a most cruel indignity offered to "*those brave men*," (so he nobly calls them), to suppose them capable of having any religion. † *Read*

And for your use they now intend,

Well!



(23)

" Well ! now at last (they will exclaim)
" You make your injur'd King your debtor ;
" You could not more consult your fame,
" Or for your country's good do better."

Yet, if this foolish thing you do,
Out on all half-pac'd imitation!
Go handsomely and roundly through,
And spoil not a good application.

F I N I S.

(22)

2

"Well! now at last (they will exclaim)

"You make your injured King your debtor

"You could not more confuse your name

"Or for your country's good do better."

Yet if this foolish thing you dare

Out on all half imitations!

Go hand some boldly through

And spoil not application.



2111